

26/08/16 - Introduction

Over the next seven weeks we're holding a conversation with you about the gap in our budget and how we might address it. We want to know from you what we could stop doing, what you value most and where a service could be reduced or delivered differently without impacting too much on your daily lives. Each week we'll be looking at a range of services you might have a view on. We'll try to answer all your questions, point you to where you can get any detail you need, and hopefully you'll be able to get involved.

First up for discussion on Monday will be:

- industrial estates
- homelessness
- sheltered housing , economic development, housing grants.

Should we be providing these services, or could we save money by providing some of them differently?

28/08/16 – Cllr Cree Video

An invitation from the leader of the Moray Council, Cllr Stewart Cree.

29/08/16 - Economics

A council priority is economic development, which helps the local economy grow and diversify. We provide advice and support to new business start-ups, manage a portfolio of industrial estates, and grants to various bodies that increase visitor numbers and employment opportunities. Should all or some of this be done by us, or by another government agency, such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise?

29/08/16 – Fantastic Comments

Fantastic comments and suggestions received over the weekend with regards to the Moray Council budget consultation. We are working on the responses to your many questions and will respond shortly. Keep the comments and suggestions coming. [#getinvolved](#)

30/08/16 – Thanks for your comments (No comments)

Thanks for all the comments, hope the answers you've had so far help in some way. This week we're mainly looking at a few of the council's roles that you might have a view on how it's delivered.

For example, we've already had a comment this weekend about the provision of sheltered housing, but is this a service we should delegate entirely to the private sector?

Economic development is a council priority for this administration, but is not a statutory role for councils. The st...

01/09/16 – Budget info page (No comments)

We've a budget information page set up on our website which we hope will be of some use in setting out where we are and what we need to do together.

Please have a look, and if there's anything else you need in terms of more info on a specific service or cost don't hesitate to get in touch. You can message here on Facebook or use the

email address on the web page

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_106375.html

02/09/16 – Shopping Basket video

05/09/16 – Health & Social Care Intro

Thank you everyone that's posted suggestions, these will be put to councillors to inform their discussions as to what areas of the council's spend can be looked at for savings. This week we're looking at how we deliver care services and if anything can be changed there to make it more affordable for the council. Our most used service in this regard is the home care service, which has an army of over 400 carers supervised by a small management team. Demand for this service is...**06/09/16 – Telecare**

Keeping the conversation on Health and Social care topics this week, what's your experience of telecare? Telecare includes a range of tech aids that help people remain independent and stay in their own homes. Things such as movement sensors, fall detectors, temperature extremes sensors, etc. A full list is here:

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_53772.html If you have any experience of these aids do they make any difference to you? Is there another way we could de...**07/09/16**

– OT

While we're talking about health and social care and the services that will be part of the new IJB set-up, have any of you needed the Occupational Therapy (OT) service? We spend £313,341 a year providing equipment and minor adaptations to help people through a post-op recovery or conditions, from a pair of crutches (£15), a raised loo seat (£45), through to purpose-made aids costing many hundreds. Equipment can be re-used but is infrequently returned once they're no longer ne...

09/09/16 – Contractors

Several people have suggested that the council should use local contractors for our supplies and services. Although we are tied to contracts agreed at national level for some services, we'd love to use local providers wherever possible. This is a list of all the contracts shortly due for renewal: <http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file105476.pdf>

If you or a business you know could provide any of these services, the first step is to register with us before you can submit a tender. Here's a link to a page on our website that will guide you through the process: http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_87343.html

12/09/16 – Public Toilets

Thank you for keeping this conversation going with your contributions. We're already looking at several of them that will help the council's budget position.

Among the topics we're raising this week is public toilets. They don't cost that much in the context of the council's budget, but in this day and age when there are 24-hour supermarkets, petrol stations and the like, are they needed? And if they are, is the council

the best organisation to look after them, or could a community group take them on? What do you think? [#getinvolved](#)

13/09/16 – School Crossing

We spend £259,000 every year on providing school crossing patrollers. We, along with lots of other local authorities, have provided this service on a discretionary basis because of national guidance which makes it clear this is seen as best practice. However, there is no legal obligation on us to provide school crossing patrollers, and it is the duty of parents to ensure that your children arrive safely to school. Can you ensure your child arrives safely without our help?

15/09/16 – Community Wardens

We've had some brilliant feedback on the school crossing patrollers, thank you everyone. That thread isn't closed, but over the next couple of days we'd like some views on our Community Warden service. They work to reduce crime, reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour, improve the environmental quality of life, and assist in building community pride. For most of this year however, 28% of their time was spent dealing with dog fouling.

In other areas across Scotland, Community Wardens are responsible for issuing parking tickets; in some places they wear small cameras or have access to CCTV vehicles. What do you think of the Community Warden service? Should we keep it?

15/09/16 – Parking Survey (Press Release Post)

A two-week survey is being carried out by Moray Council in preparation for a new parking strategy for Elgin.

19/09/16 – CCTV

CCTV has been in use in public areas for several decades. It is used to deter crime and anti-social behaviour, to investigate offences and as evidence to prosecute crime. In Moray, we spend £52,000 per year on CCTV which is operated by the police as part of the overall strategy to reduce crime and aid with the detection of crime. However, nowadays many private businesses have their own CCTV systems to cover their premises, police officers wear Go-Pro style cameras on their tunics and camera phones are everywhere. Do we still need static CCTV?

19/09/16 – Corporate Services

We've had a few posts in this series of budget conversations telling us to cut the number of managers in the council – and we are undertaking a review to ensure the structure we have is fit for purpose. But the people that work in what we call the corporate services area of the council – HQ in other words – are part of a support service that every large organisation must have to function. Services such as HR, IT, accountancy, procurement, legal, are all necessary to ensure the council delivers at the front line. Moray Council has one of the leanest management structures in Scotland's public sector; 4.2% of our total gross budget against a Scottish average of 5.1%, and we've even reduced that from last year's 4.6%

figure. In hard cash terms that's £26,649 per 1,000 population. But, we have to save money so we're open to any suggestions you might have to help us do even better.

20/09/16 – Digital Services

We've seen lots of feedback from you about doing more online, both us as a council and for you as a customer. Results from a survey released by our Moray Connected team show that almost 40% of you use our website out of hours, and 70% of you want to use online services. Because of this, we're adding ways to report and request things online, which can be done quickly, on the move and has 24/7 availability. We're also looking to purchase a booking and payment system within the ...

21/09/16 – Legal Services

At £62 an hour, our legal services costs are roughly half those of the private sector. Our solicitors are kept busy on advice, statutory processes and appeals for planning, roads, housing, waste management, employment, procurement, adoption, fostering, social care, education.....and more. They handle property sales and leases, debt recovery and help ensure committee meetings run smoothly. Have you had experience of our legal team? Is there anything we could do better?

22/09/16 – Performance Mgmt (no comments)

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23/09/16 – Engagement

Since we are talking about corporate services, in the Chief Executive's Office we deliver a lot of the engagement and communication with our communities. Our team has been involved in the engagement around leisure services, school rezoning, previous budget consultation and of course, this one.

We are half way through this engagement with you. Tell us what you think of this one or previous consultation exercises.

23/09/16 – School Build quiz

Here is a fun wee quiz for a Friday afternoon to get you thinking about next week's topic - Education [#getinvolved](#)

23/09/16 – Parent Survey (No comments)

Every two years, we consult parents and carers on satisfaction with their schools. It will be done again in 2017. The survey goes out from the school and they receive feedback on the survey results. From the last survey the respondents told us that 'Overall, I'm happy with the school'. (86% for primary and 78% for secondary schools) Do you agree with these findings? Let us know. [#getinvolved](#)

26/09/16 – Education Introduction

We're moving the conversation on to education this week. This is a big ticket item that consumes £94 million a year – nearly half the council's budget. As a starter, we'd be interested in a conversation with you about schools in Moray. We're told there's a teacher shortage in Moray and across Scotland, but here's an interesting fact: apart from national shortages in some secondary subjects such as maths and sciences, we have enough teachers for all our pupils.

30/09/16 – E Learning

Thank you for all the views and posts on big schools, small schools and teacher shortages, they'll be put to elected councillors at the end of this conversation period on October 14. You can post at any time about anything on this page, but you might have a view on another way to address teacher shortages we suffer from in certain subjects. What about the adoption of e-learning in Moray?

E-learning has the potential to allow one teacher to deliver classes to a larger number ...

30/09/16 – School Transport

School transport costs just over £4million a year, and in Moray we're pretty efficient at it. Our statutory requirement is to provide transport to school to those pupils 8 and older living 3 miles or more from school. However we have elected to provide transport to those within a 2 mile radius, the same as for under-8s. Delivering the legal minimum for over-8s could save a small amount of our annual bill for starters.

If you use it or your children do, what's your experience of school transport and is there anything we or you could do to reduce the cost of it? [#getinvolved](#)

03/10/16 – Winter Transport

We all want our roads cleared to get us to work in the winter mornings. We prioritise the roads gritting to help achieve this, but all roads cannot be cleared by 7am due to our large roads network. How can we manage your expectations of all roads being clear by the time you travel to work? Would gritting the roads just at night but not in the morning work? Reducing the number of priority routes we grit or could we all change our driving habits to mitigate a reduction in the service? Sometimes knowing that the roads are not treated means we plan for adverse conditions a bit better by fitting snow tyres, etc. We could potentially save up to £600k by significantly reducing the service, but what do you think? [#getinvolved](#)

05/10/16 – Recycling

Thank you to everyone who joined in the chat about road maintenance, some very positive comments and workable ideas there that will be forwarded to councillors to inform their budget proposals. You can add more at anytime, but today we'd like to talk about recycling. We - or more accurately, you - do pretty well in the recycling stakes. Moray is repeatedly in the top three councils for this, currently recycling 57% of all waste, saving you £2.45 million a year.

The Scottish Government has set a target of 70%, to be the best in Europe. To achieve this requires a big effort, but it would save a whopping £3million in landfill tax. What can we - and you - do to keep plastics, paper and tins out of the green bin and save that cash?

07/10/16 – Grounds Maintenance

Following on from our recycling chat, we should think about our grounds maintenance operations. We cut this quite a bit last time around and some groups have stepped up to fill the gaps with great success. Dufftown, Duffus and Forres spring to mind, where the community have achieved amazing results and awards (see pic of Forres display)

Our ground maintenance teams also dig graves, spray weeds, maintain playpark equipment, manage parks and woodland areas and a host of other jobs to keep Moray looking good. It all costs nearly £1.3m a year.

In how many of Moray's towns and villages is there the potential for more community involvement in this maintenance, including perhaps some cemeteries? What support would this need to be sustainable? We'd like to hear what you think.

10/10/16 – Libraries and Leisure

This week we'll be talking about libraries and leisure facilities. If you've read our booklet on the council's budget (<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file106771.pdf>) it's clear that closing all libraries and leisure facilities will not close our funding gap by enough to solve the problem. But to make them sustainable with a diminishing budget, what should these services look like in the 21st Century? Let's have your thoughts...